The New York Times | https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/27/insider/anita-hill-ad-kavanaugh.html

Your Beliefs Here: A Look at Advocacy Advertising in The Times

A recent print ad in support of Christine Blasey Ford is part of a long history of advertisements in the paper whose main purpose is to forward a cause.

By Alexandria Symonds and Katie Van Syckle

Sept. 27, 2018

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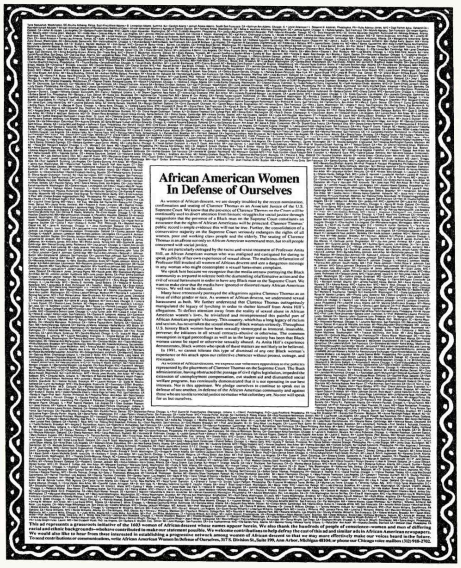
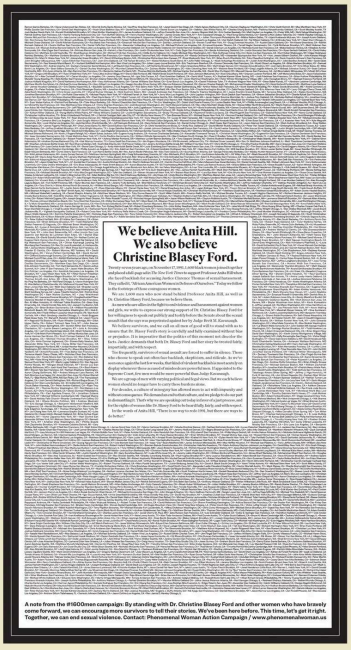

African American Women In Defense of Ourselves

An advertisement in support of Anita Hill that ran Nov. 17, 1991 in The New York Times.


We believe Anita Hill. We also believe Christine Blasey Ford.

An ad that ran in The Times this week in support of Christine Blasey Ford, designed in homage to the 1991 ad.

You may have noticed a bold advertisement in The New York Times on Wednesday: a full page with the names of 1,600 men, in a tiny font, surrounding a box in the center stating: “We believe Anita Hill. We also believe Christine Blasey Ford.”

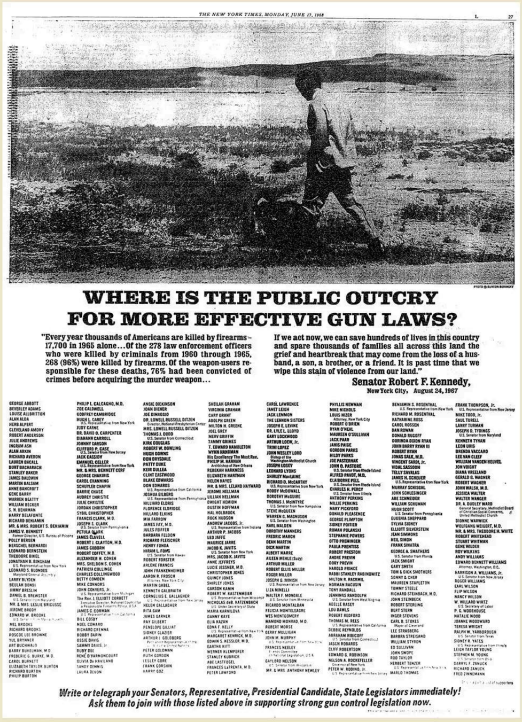
Many observers have noted that Thursday’s Senate Judiciary Committee hearings with Dr. Blasey and Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh, whom she has accused of sexual assault when both were teenagers, echoed the 1991 hearings for Anita Hill, who alleged that Judge Clarence Thomas had sexually harassed her while he was her supervisor in the Education Department and at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

This ad in The Times, too, may have called up memories of those 1991 events — this time, on purpose. It was designed as homage to an ad that ran Nov. 17, 1991, a bit smaller but with the same layout: hundreds of tiny names, and the title “African American Women in Defense of Ourselves.” That ad was organized by three black feminist scholars, Barbara Ransby, Deborah King and Elsa Barkley Brown, who spent weeks amassing signatures and donations to pay for the statement in support for Ms. Hill.

The Times has a long history of running advertisements whose main purpose isn’t to sell an item or service, but rather to advocate a cause; the paper regularly runs them to this day. Back in 1915, the German Embassy issued a warning reminding passengers intending to travel aboard the Lusitania, the British ocean liner that was sunk by a German U-boat, “that a state of war exists between Germany and her allies and Great Britain and her allies,” which later made front-page news: “German Advertisement Practically Foretold Lusitania’s Fate on Day She Sailed,” read a subheadline a week later.

Other notable examples have included an ad in 1922 by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to protest lynching; a 1966 ad from members of the academic community imploring Washington to terminate the American

military presence in Vietnam; and an ad signed more than 20 companies, including Google, Unilever and Morgan Stanley, to encourage President Trump not to withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement in 2017.



WHERE IS THE PUBLIC OUTCRY
FOR MORE EFFECTIVE GUN LAWS?

"Every year thousands of Americans are killed by firearms—17,700 in 1965 alone... Of the 278 law enforcement officers who were killed by criminals from 1960 through 1965, 268 (96%) were killed by firearms. Of the weapon-users responsible for these deaths, 78% had been convicted of crimes before acquiring the murder weapon...

If we act now, we can save hundreds of lives in this country and spare thousands of families all across this land the grief and heartbreak that may come from the loss of a husband, a son, a brother, or a friend. It is past time that we wipe this stain of violence from our land."

Senator Robert F. Kennedy,
New York City, August 24, 1967

Write or telegraph your Senators, Representative, Presidential Candidate, State Legislators immediately!
Ask them to join with those listed above in supporting strong gun control legislation now.

The Times routinely runs advocacy ads. Here, a 1967 example in support of gun control that was signed by Julie Andrews, Johnny Carson, Frank Sinatra and "Sonny & Cher," among many others.

President Trump has also made use of advocacy advertising in The Times: In 1989, the paper was among four in which he ran a 600-word advertisement calling for reinstatement of the death penalty in the aftermath of the rape and assault of a jogger in Central Park. (The five teenagers who were convicted in the case were later exonerated.)

All kinds of advertisements are fair game, so long as they meet the paper's guidelines. According to the paper's Advertising Acceptability Manual: "The New York Times accepts advertisements in which groups or individuals comment on public or controversial issues. We make no judgments on an advertiser's

arguments, factual assertions or conclusions. We accept advocacy/opinion advertisements regardless of our editorial position on any given subject. We do not, however, accept advocacy advertisements that are attacks of a personal nature, that seek to comment on private disputes or that contain vulgar or indecent language. We do not accept advertisements that are gratuitously offensive on racial, religious or ethnic grounds or that are considered to be in poor taste."

"We routinely accept issue-related advocacy ads as long as the ad meets with our standards and requirements," said Eileen Murphy, the senior vice president for communications. "We require and publish details about the sponsor of any advocacy ad, plus a legitimate point of contact, for example a website, for that organization."

In the case of the 1991 ad in defense of Ms. Hill, "We wanted black women's voices to be heard, and we found her story to be believable," said Dr. Ransby, a history professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago. She and her fellow organizers set up a telephone number and a post-office box to collect contributions and raised about $50,000 from signatories. Many of them sent donations in the $10 to $25 range, according to Dr. Barkley Brown, a professor of history and women's studies at the University of Maryland.

Among the signatories were prominent figures then and now, including the writers Audre Lorde, Toni Morrison and Tayari Jones, who posted a thread on Twitter last week about her experience being asked to add her name to the ad while she was a 20-year-old graduate student at the University of Iowa. She contributed $25, a donation that felt like a significant sacrifice. "It was the first time I'd ever really put my money where my mouth was," Ms. Jones said this week. "For $25, I could have eaten dinner out three times."

Ms. Jones's posts have been retweeted more than 19,000 times, and it was her Twitter thread that brought the 1991 ad to the attention of Meena Harris, a founder of the Phenomenal Woman Action Campaign, who was working with the nonprofit group Futures Without Violence to try to find a way to show support for Dr. Blasey. For the new ad, Ms. Harris was inspired by a statement that had been drafted by

the male board members of Futures Without Violence, and spread the word through email, text messaging and social media in pursuit of more male allies to add their names to the cause. Working alongside Alicia Garza, co-founder of the Black Lives Matter Global Network, they set out to collect $100,000 to pay for the ad and have raised more than $140,000 to date; the excess, the organizers said, will go toward violence prevention programming.

Though their methods were very different — social media callouts and a crowdfunding campaign through mightycause.com, as compared with the phone number, post-office box and piles of checks for Ms. Ransby and her fellow organizers — the result looked much the same: a prominent, attention-getting ad in The New York Times.

“I ride hard for print,” Ms. Harris said, “because it’s permanent.”

Research contributed by Jack Begg and Alain Delaquérière.

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